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28 October 2016

Version of attached file:

Accepted Version

Peer-review status of attached file:

Peer-reviewed

Citation for published item:

Manson, Jamie L. and Schlueter, John A. and Garrett, Kerry E. and Goddard, Paul A. and Lancaster, Tom and Möller, Johannes S. and Blundell, Stephen J. and Steele, Andrew J. and Franke, Isabel and Pratt, Francis L. and Singleton, John and Bendix, Jesper and Lapidus, Saul H. and Uhlarz, Marc and Ayala-Valenzuela, Oscar and McDonald, Ross D. and Gurak, Mary and Baines, Christopher (2016) 'Bimetallic MOFs (H₃O)_x[Cu(MF₆)(pyrazine)₂](4 - x)H₂O (M = V⁴⁺, x = 0; M = Ga³⁺, x = 1) : co-existence of ordered and disordered quantum spins in the V⁴⁺ system.', *Chemical communications.*, 52 (85). pp. 12653-12656.

Further information on publisher's website:

<https://doi.org/10.1039/C6CC05873F>

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Bimetallic MOFs (H₃O)_x[Cu(MF₆)(pyrazine)₂](4-x)H₂O (M = V⁴⁺, x = 0; M = Ga³⁺, x = 1): co-existence of ordered and disordered quantum spins in the V⁴⁺ system

Received 00th January 20xx,
Accepted 00th January 20xx

DOI: 10.1039/x0xx00000x

www.rsc.org/

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The title compounds are bimetallic MOFs containing [Cu(pyrazine)₂]²⁺ square lattices linked by MF₆ⁿ⁻ octahedra. In each, only the Cu²⁺ spins exhibit long-range magnetic order below 3.5 K (M = V⁴⁺) and 2.6 K (M = Ga³⁺). The V⁴⁺ spins remain disordered down to 0.5 K.

Low-dimensional metal-organic solids have yielded a plethora of interesting structure types that display a broad range of magnetic behaviors including bistability, slow relaxation of the magnetization, and conventional Néel order.¹ The design of such materials depends on the symmetry, size, reactivity, and stability of the building block(s) used to prepare them. A great advantage of metal-organic systems (relative to metal oxides for example) is their general ease of synthesis and systematic tunability of physical properties by the variation of the metal ion (identity and/or oxidation state) and the organic ligands. For magnetic materials, paramagnetic building blocks are obviously important and the search for new examples with desired properties is an on-going endeavor.

Discrete perfluoro MF₆³⁻ complexes²⁻⁴ are known for M = V³⁺, Cr³⁺, and Fe³⁺ whereas MF₆²⁻ is exceedingly sparse with

only one example, VF₆²⁻,⁵ reported to date. It would be of great interest to employ these open-shell, valence flexible, complexes as building blocks to synthesize extended structures analogous to Prussian Blues and the like.⁶ Recently, it has been shown in μ -F dimers such as [Cu₂(μ -F)(μ -L)₂](BF₄)₃ {L = *m-bis*[bis(3,5-dimethyl-1-pyrazolyl)-methyl]benzene} that linear Cu-F-Cu bridges can support superexchange interactions as high as 450 K.⁷

Fluoride ion, with its simultaneous preference for linear bridging and for metal centers in high oxidation states, can direct the self-assembly of extended structures. Here, we report on the bimetallic [Cu(VF₆)(pyz)₂](4H₂O) (**1**) and (H₃O)[Cu(GaF₆)(pyz)₂](3H₂O) (**2**) with pyz being pyrazine. The respective VF₆²⁻ and GaF₆³⁻ building blocks were generated *in-situ* from VF₄ and GaF₃ precursors in the presence of HF(aq) or aqueous NH₄HF₂.[†] Their crystal structures consist of 3D metal-organic frameworks (MOFs) composed of 2D [Cu(pyrazine)₂]²⁺ square sheets bridged by paramagnetic VF₆²⁻ (**1**) or diamagnetic GaF₆³⁻ (**2**) moieties. Study of their magnetic property reveals that only the Cu²⁺ moments undergo long-range magnetic order (LRO) in both compounds. Thus, we propose that the S = 1/2 V⁴⁺ sites in **1** facilitate the interlayer exchange interaction but themselves remain disordered down to at least 0.5 K.

The structures of **1** and **2** were determined at 100 K using single crystal X-ray diffraction methods.⁸ Both crystallize in the tetragonal space group *P4/nbm* and have similar unit cell parameters. The Cu²⁺ ion occupies a 422 symmetry site whereas V⁴⁺/Ga³⁺ sites reside on inversion centers. Each Cu²⁺ ion is ligated to four N-donor atoms from different pyrazine ligands at distances of 2.050(1) Å (**1**) and 2.045(1) Å (**2**) while the axial Cu-F1 distances are longer at 2.238(2) Å (**1**) and 2.236(1) Å (**2**). The local geometry about the CuN₄F₂ core is very similar for **1**, **2**, and [Cu(HF₂)(pyz)₂]BF₄.⁹ In **1**, the V⁴⁺ center is coordinated to six different F⁻ anions at distances of 1.870(2) (2x) and 1.927(1) Å (4x) for V-F1 and V-F2, respectively. Thus, within experimental error the VF₆²⁻ ion can be described as isotropic; the GaF₆³⁻ anion in **2** behaves similarly.

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Electronic Supplementary Information (ESI) available: CIFs for [Cu(VF₆)(pyz)₂](4H₂O) and (H₃O)[Cu(GaF₆)(pyz)₂](3H₂O) at 100 K. CCDC 1494074 and 1494075. Thermal ellipsoid plots, atom labelling scheme and ESR data. See DOI: 10.1039/x0xx00000x

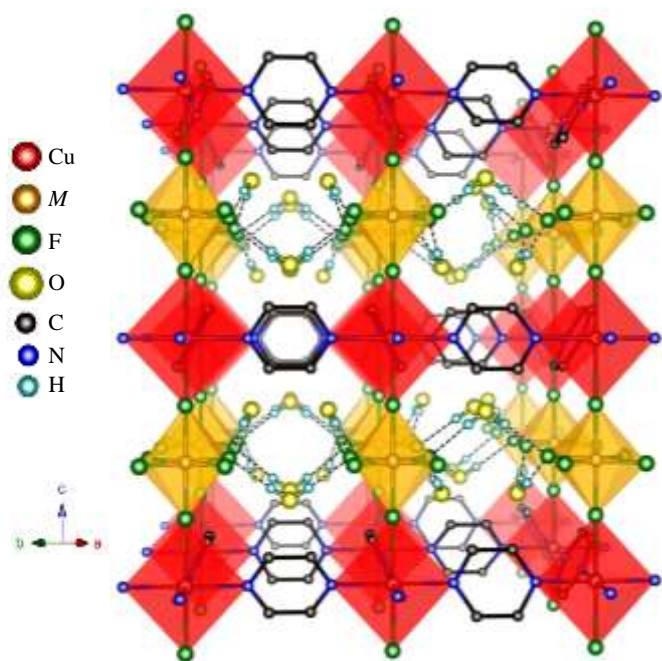


Fig. 1 Polyhedral rendition of the metal-organic framework (MOF) for $(\text{H}_3\text{O})_x[\text{Cu}(\text{MF}_6)(\text{pyz})_2] \cdot (4-x)\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ((1) $M = \text{V}$, $x = 0$; (2) $M = \text{Ga}$, $x = 1$). The strong O-H...F hydrogen bonds are delineated by dashed lines. Pyz H-atoms are omitted for clarity.

In **1** and **2**, pyz ligands connect Cu^{2+} centers to form 2D square sheets $[\text{Cu} \cdots \text{Cu} = 6.882(1) \text{ \AA}$ for **1** and $6.868(1) \text{ \AA}$ for **2**] within the *ab*-plane while bridging $\text{VF}_6^{2-}/\text{GaF}_6^{3-}$ anions link the sheets together $[\text{Cu} \cdots \text{V} = 4.108(1) \text{ \AA}$ for **1**; $\text{Cu} \cdots \text{Ga} = 4.121(1) \text{ \AA}$ for **2**] to afford Cu-F-M-F-Cu chains along the *c*-axis. The result is the 3D polymeric framework depicted in Figure 1. The 4-fold rotational symmetry of the Cu^{2+} site imposes a propeller-like disposition of the pyz ligands, giving a tilt angle of $62.84(6)^\circ$ (**1**) and $63.39(6)^\circ$ (**2**) relative to the CuN_4 equatorial plane. Both angles are greater/less than the corresponding angles of $59.4(2)/81.4(1)^\circ$ found in $[\text{Cu}(\text{HF}_2)(\text{pyz})_2]\text{BF}_4$ and its SbF_6^- analog.^{9,10} The MF_4 plane (that contain F2) within the MF_6^{n-} core is rotated about the *c*-axis by 45° relative to CuN_4 thus, all MF_6^{n-} octahedra along the *c*-direction share identical configurations. Waters of crystallization occupy each pore and form hydrogen bonds with terminal F atoms from MF_6^{n-} octahedra [(1): $\text{H1A-F2} = 1.86(1) \text{ \AA}$, $\text{O1-H1A-F2} = 176(2)^\circ$; (2): $\text{H1-F1} = 1.85(1) \text{ \AA}$, $\text{O1-H1-F1} = 178(2)^\circ$]. For **2**, one out of every four H_2O 's is a charge-compensating H_3O^+ cation, and because of the 4-fold symmetry of those sites, the proton is positionally disordered. Electron-density difference maps support this conclusion.

The magnetic susceptibility $\chi(T)$ obtained for polycrystalline samples of **1** and **2** between 2 and 300 K are shown collectively in Figure 2a. At first glance, **1** appears to be paramagnetic without any anomalies that would have indicated a magnetic phase transition whereas **2** displays a broad maximum at 6 K, a feature typical of other quasi-2D coordination polymers including $\text{Cu}(\text{ClO}_4)_2(\text{pyz})_2$ ¹¹ and $[\text{Cu}(\text{HF}_2)(\text{pyz})_2]\text{X}$ ($\text{X} = \text{BF}_4^-, \text{PF}_6^-, \text{SbF}_6^-, \text{TaF}_6^-$) that show short-range spin correlations.⁹⁻¹³ The lack of a maximum in $\chi(T)$ for **1** suggests that the additional fluctuating (i.e., paramagnetic) V^{4+}

spin likely masks this feature. Being that Ga^{3+} in **2** is a closed-shell cation, the expected magnetic lattice is quasi-2D and should yield the observed broad maximum in $\chi(T)$.

The crystal structures of **1** and **2** contain common 2D $[\text{Cu}(\text{pyz})_2]^{2+}$ square lattices and, as such, the primary exchange interaction is governed by Cu-pyz-Cu pathways (J_{2D}). Electron-spin resonance experiments (see SI) confirm that the Cu^{2+} magnetic $d_{x^2-y^2}$ orbital lies in the 2D CuN_4 plane for both **1** and **2**. Considering an additional (albeit weak) exchange interaction along V-F-Cu-F-V (J_{1D}) in **1**, the $\chi(T)$ data may be described by an antiferromagnetic (AFM) Heisenberg $S = 1/2$ model ($\hat{H} = J\sum \mathbf{S}_i \cdot \mathbf{S}_j$) based on the sum of two components; a 2D quadratic lattice¹⁴ and orthogonal 1D chains.¹⁵ For **2**, only the quadratic model was required. In Figure 2a, the results of the least-squares fit give excellent reproducibility with the data for the following parameters; $g_{\text{Cu}} = 2.21(1)$, $g_{\text{V}} = 1.93(1)$, $J_{2D} = 11.8(1) \text{ K}$, and $J_{1D} = 0.5(1) \text{ K}$ for **1** and $g_{\text{Cu}} = 2.27(1)$ and $J_{2D} = 6.6(1) \text{ K}$ for **2**. The fitted Landé *g*-factors are average values and agree with the ESR-determined values.

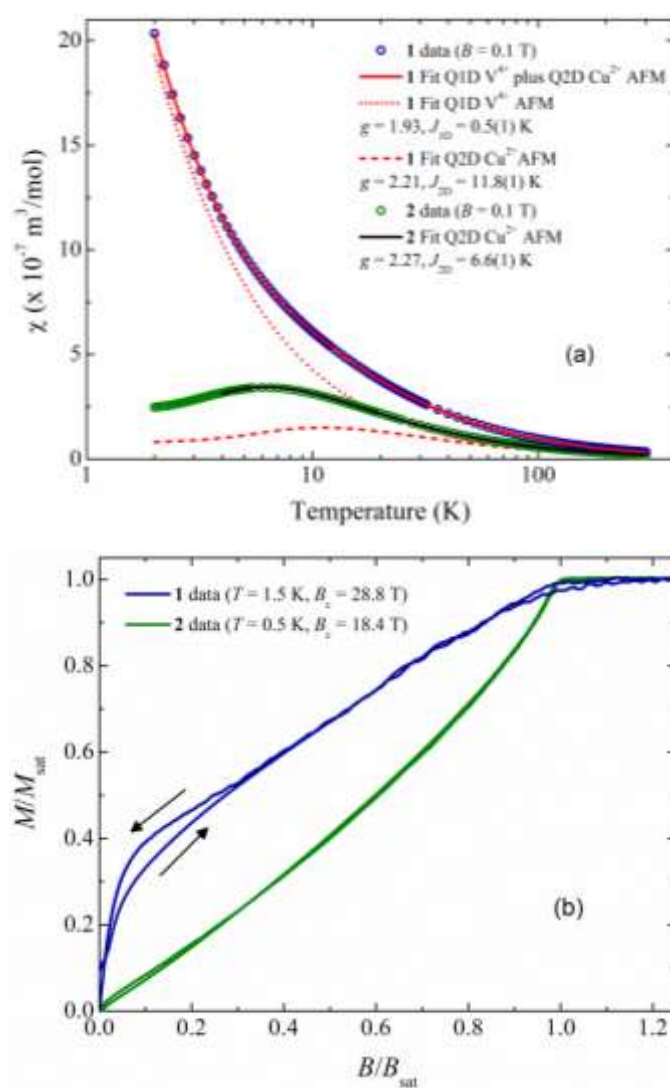


Fig. 2 (a) Magnetic susceptibility data (open symbols) for **1** and **2**. Solid lines represent theoretical fits as described in the text. (b) Pulsed-field magnetization data for **1** and **2** at low temperatures.

Pulsed-field magnetization¹⁶ data for **1** and **2** acquired up to 40 T and at $T = 0.5$ K are shown in Figure 2b. The main difference exhibited by the two compounds is the low-field region below ~ 10 T where **1** shows hysteresis between up- and down-field sweeps which is attributed to fluctuating V^{4+} moments. Above 10 T, the magnetization rises in a concave fashion which is indicative of low-dimensional spin interactions.¹⁶ In contrast, **2** shows only a concave rise in the magnetization with a critical field (B_c) of 18.4 T (as determined by the midpoint of the gradient in dM/dB) which is substantially less than the 28.8 T critical field found in **1**. We can use these critical fields to independently deduce J_{2D} based on the simple relationship, $J_{2D} \approx g_{Cu}B_c/6.03$ T,¹⁶ which gives 10.6(1) K ($g_{Cu} = 2.21$) and 6.8(1) K ($g_{Cu} = 2.27$) for **1** and **2**, respectively, of which the latter J_{2D} is in line with the value obtained from the fit of $\chi(T)$. We attribute the slight discrepancy between calculated and fitted J_{2D} 's for **1** as being due to the gradual approach to saturation resulting in a broadened transition.

The Cu-pyz-Cu magnetic interaction for **1** and **2** can be rationalized by superexchange via the σ -bond network containing adjacent Cu magnetic $d_{x^2-y^2}$ orbitals and lone-pair orbitals located on N-atoms. The weak interaction mediated along V-F-Cu-F-V is not surprising in that the spin-paired d_z^2 orbital (of Cu) overlaps the p_z orbital of F ligands. Because F⁻ has no practical π -acceptor character, any interaction along this pathway is likely facilitated by mixing of the Cu $d_{x^2-y^2}$ and d_z^2 orbitals. In addition, the single V^{4+} electron resides in a π -type orbital (i.e., d_{xy} , d_{xz} , or d_{yz}). Its overlap with $d_{x^2-y^2}$ (Cu), although not zero by symmetry due to the relative orientations of the CuN_4F_2 and VF_6^{2-} octahedra, is predicted to be rather small.

Broken symmetry (BS) density-functional theoretical (DFT) calculations¹⁷ were undertaken for **1** in order to corroborate this picture. Calculations were performed on dinuclear fragments of the experimental structure namely, *trans*, *trans*-[(pyz)₃CuF₂(μ -pyz)CuF₂(pyz)₃] and *trans*-[(HF)Cu(pyz)₄(μ -F)VF₅]. In the latter case a proton was added to the terminal fluoride on copper in an optimized position with F_{Cu-H} of 1.18 Å in order for both fragments to have the same charge. The computed spin density distributions for the two fragments are shown in Figure 3. The exchange coupling constants were calculated to be AFM (12.6 K) and FM (-0.29 K), supporting the experimental picture of a 2D magnetic structure with only very weak interactions along the V-F-Cu-F-V chains. Attempts to

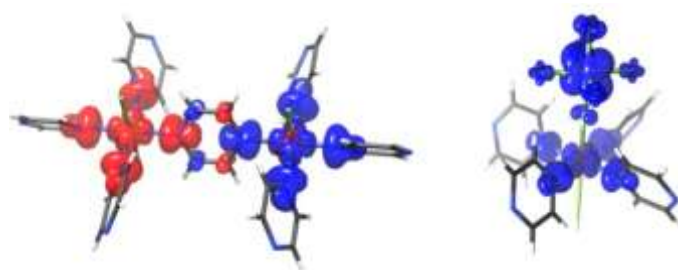


Fig. 3. DFT computed spin density distributions for the *trans*, *trans*-[(pyz)₃CuF₂(μ -pyz)CuF₂(pyz)₃] (left) and *trans*-[(HF)Cu(pyz)₄(μ -F)VF₅] (right). Isosurface values are ± 0.00087 and ± 0.002 1/Å³, respectively.

constrain $J > 0$ in the fit of $\chi(T)$ leads to g -factors different from those obtained by ESR. In either case $|J_{1D}|$ is consistently small and a spin polarization mechanism seemingly fails to explain the experimental result for Cu-F-V.

The presence of LRO in **1** and **2** was confirmed by muon-spin relaxation (μ SR) measurements carried out at the STFC ISIS Facility, Rutherford-Appleton Laboratory (UK) using a sorption cryostat on the MuSR beamline and at the Swiss Muon Source, Paul Scherrer Institut (Switzerland) using the LTF instrument.

In data measured on **1** we observe oscillations in the muon polarization below 3.5 K at a single frequency. These oscillations reflect the coherent precession of muon spins about a local quasi-static B -field implying that the system is in a state of LRO. The precession frequency ν is plotted against T in Figure 4. The frequency ν may be taken as an effective order parameter for the system, and is fitted to the phenomenological function $\nu(T) = \nu(0)(1 - (T/T_N)^\alpha)^\beta$. We obtain a fitted value for the critical temperature of $T_N = 3.5(2)$ K and an exponent $\beta = 0.33(3)$, the latter suggesting that fluctuations in this system have a three-dimensional character. The observed behavior of **1** is similar to other $S=1/2$ Cu²⁺ molecular magnets studied previously¹⁸ in both transition temperature and magnitude of internal field at the muon site. However, the oscillations observed for this system are significantly more damped than found in previous cases, likely caused by spatial or temporal fluctuations of magnetic moments on the V^{4+} ions. Data measured above 3.5 K show slow, heavily damped oscillations attributable to dipole-dipole interactions between muons and ¹⁹F nuclei as observed previously in other fluorine-containing molecule-based magnets.¹⁹

In the data measured on **2** no well-resolved oscillations exist at any measured temperature down to 0.025 K, indicating a broader distribution of magnetic fields in **2** compared to **1**. However, there is a distinct change in shape of the muon spectra below 2.6 K involving a sizeable increase in the Gaussian relaxation rate σ . This relaxation rate represents the width of the local field distribution experienced by the muon ensemble and is expected to scale with the magnitude of the average local field. The evolution of σ with temperature is also

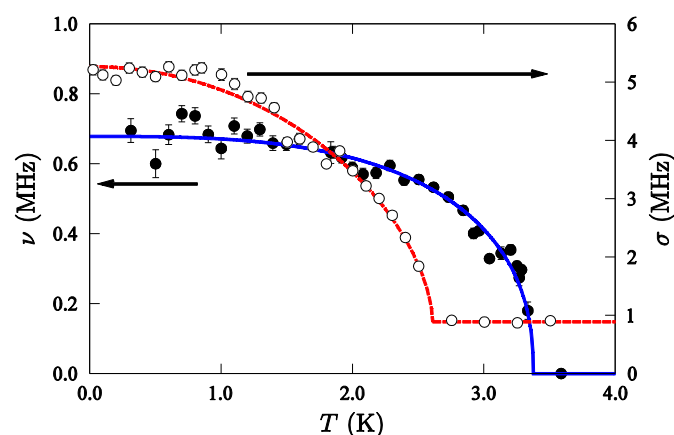


Fig. 4. Evolution of the muon spin precession frequency ν for **1** (filled circles) and the Gaussian relaxation rate σ for **2** (unfilled circles). The blue line denotes the fit described in the text; the red line is a guide to the eye.

shown in Figure 4 and closely resembles the expected order parameter behavior, decreasing as 2.6(1) K is approached from below. Taken together with the discontinuous decrease in the non-relaxing muon polarization above T_N (which often accompanies a magnetic ordering transition),¹⁸ we conclude that **2** undergoes a transition to LRO below $T_N = 2.6(1)$ K.

Conclusions

The self-assembly of Cu^{2+} and MF_6^{n-} building blocks ($M = \text{V}^{4+}$ (**1**) or Ga^{3+} (**2**)) leads to promising magnetic MOFs. Quasi-1D alternating chains of $M\text{-F-Cu-F-M}$ are formed that are cross-linked by pyrazine ligands to form robust 3D frameworks. Water molecules fill interstitial sites in both compounds but additional H_3O^+ molecules are needed to balance charge in **2**. The magnetism of **1** and **2** is dominated by exchange interactions manifested by 2D $[\text{Cu}(\text{pyz})_2]^{2+}$ square lattices albeit of differing strengths ($J_{2D} = 11.8$ and 6.6 K for **1** and **2**, respectively). Presently, the disparity in J_{2D} values cannot be rationalized as previous works have failed to establish magnetostructural correlations in related quasi-2D systems.²⁰ In **1**, the $S = 1/2$ V^{4+} moments continue to fluctuate down to 0.5 K but foster a weak interlayer magnetic interaction resulting in a higher T_N of 3.5 K compared to $T_N = 2.6$ K for **2**. Corresponding T_N/J ratios of 0.30 and 0.39 suggest enhanced low-dimensionality in **1** despite its higher T_N value. This may suggest the presence of additional symmetry-breaking terms in the spin Hamiltonian that are not presently considered.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT. Work at EWU was supported by the NSF under grant no. DMR-1306158. Research supported by UChicago Argonne, LLC, operator of Argonne National Laboratory ("Argonne"). Argonne, a U. S. Department of Energy (DoE) Office of Science Laboratory, is operated under contract no. DE-AC02-06CH11357. This work was also supported by the EPSRC, UK and by the HLD at HZDR, a member of the European Magnetic Field Laboratory (EMFL). We are grateful to the STFC ISIS Facility and to the Swiss Muon Source for the provision of beamtime. Work at the NHMFL was conducted under the auspices of the NSF, the DoE BES program "Science in 100 T" and the State of Florida.

Notes and references

† Stoichiometric amounts of CuF_2 , VF_4 and pyrazine were dissolved together in 48% HF(aq) to give a blue-green solution. Upon slow evaporation of the solvent overnight, X-ray quality blue prisms of **1** crystallized in high yield. Blue plates of **2** were obtained by the reaction of CuF_2 , GaF_3 , NH_4HF_2 and pyrazine in H_2O with slow evaporation of the solvent. Infrared spectroscopic data reveal the expected stretching and bending modes of H_2O , pyz and MF_6^{n-} . Further details of the SQUID, pulsed-field magnetization, and muon-spin relaxation measurements can be found in refs. [10] and [16].

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